

# DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY



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The **Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** is committed to protecting and enhancing Michigan's environment and public health. As leaders in the stewardship of Michigan's environment, the members of this department work on behalf of the people of the Great Lakes state for an improved quality of life and a sustainable future so that future generations can enjoy and utilize the state's resources.

The DEQ was originally created by an executive order issued by then Governor John Engler in 1995, removing environmental functions and programs then administered mostly under the state Department of Natural Resources. Governor Jennifer Granholm recombined the agencies in 2010. Governor Rick Snyder's first executive order (E.O. No. 2011-1) returned the agencies to independent cabinet posts.

The executive order stated that, consistent with Section 3 of Article V of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the director of the DEQ shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor, subject to the advice and consent process. The director functions as the department's chief executive officer, monitors program activities to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of department operations, and ensures that the department's mission, policies, and statutory mandates are met. The director's primary authority flows from the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, and is authorized by Executive Order 1991-31 to delegate decision-making authorities to appropriate levels within the department.

The DEQ is guided by three main principles: (1) To be a leader in environmental stewardship; (2) to be a full partner in Michigan's economic recovery and development; and (3) to excel at customer service.

The **Office of Legislative Affairs** works as the liaison between the Governor's office, legislators, and stakeholder groups on emerging or changing environmental issues. This office focuses on strengthening the DEQ's relationship with the Legislature and ensuring adequate environmental regulations are in place.

The **Administration Division** provides a complete range of financial and administrative support services to the DEQ, including budget development, financial management, procurement, facilities management, grants oversight, field operations support, and business operations.

The **Air Quality Division (AQD)** works with business and industrial air emission sources, as well as the general public, to maintain compliance with state and federal air quality statutes in order to minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment. Staff identify and reduce existing outdoor air pollution problems and prevent significant deterioration of air quality through air emission control programs, air monitoring, control strategy planning, permit issuance, complaint response, and inspection of air emission sources.

The **Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance (ODWMA)** includes the drinking water, source water protection, operator certification and training, environmental health (public swimming pools, campgrounds, septage, and on-site wastewater), contamination investigation,

and revolving loan programs. These programs provide regulatory oversight for public water supplies, and support to local health departments. The revolving loan programs provide grant and loan assistance for eligible drinking water, wastewater, and water quality improvement projects.

The **Office of Environmental Assistance (OEA)** implements a number of programs that promote environmental stewardship and enhance customer service related to all programs administered by the DEQ. The primary services provided by the OEA are compliance assistance, pollution prevention, environmental education, permit coordination, financial assistance, incentive programs, training, and outreach. Additionally, the OEA manages metrics, process improvement, and professional development initiatives for the DEQ.

The **Office of the Great Lakes (OGL)** was established in 1985 under the Great Lakes Protection Act to lead policy development and implement programs to protect, restore, and sustain the Great Lakes ecosystem. The OGL is responsible for Michigan's Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOC) program, Lakewide Action and Management Plan program, and Coastal Zone Management Program. These programs ensure continued efforts toward delisting of the Michigan's Great Lakes AOC's, coordination of restoration and protection activities for all the Great Lakes within Michigan, and provide federal grant funds to assist in the development of vibrant and resilient coastal communities through the protection and restoration of sensitive coastal resources.

The **Office of Oil, Gas, and Minerals (OOGM)** is responsible for assuring the efficient and orderly development of fossil fuel and mineral resources while protecting the environment, property, and public health and safety. The OOGM oversees the locating, drilling, operating, and plugging of wells used for exploration and production of oil, gas, brine, and other minerals, including wells for underground storage and waste disposal. The OOGM also regulates the development, operation, and reclamation of mines for metallic minerals and dune sand.

The **Office of Waste Management and Radiological Protection (OWMRP)** programs include the solid and hazardous waste programs, as well as work related to some radiological materials. It oversees solid waste disposal and county planning for resource recovery and disposal capacity; the transportation and collection of scrap tires; the transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal of liquid industrial and hazardous waste; electronic waste collection and recycling; and the storage and disposal of medical waste. Activities in the radiological arena include coordinating with nuclear power plants, state and local emergency responders, and the federal government to ensure that Michigan has sufficient resources in the event of a radioactive material release. The state's Radon Awareness Program is also managed from this office.

The **Remediation and Redevelopment Division (RRD)** oversees publicly-funded cleanups and provides technical assistance and financial incentives to private parties and the public to assess, reduce, or eliminate public health and environmental risks at contaminated properties throughout Michigan. The Remediation for Redevelopment (R4R) program partners with local units of government, Regions of Prosperity, and private entities to identify contaminated properties with economic potential and facilitate the actions needed for safe reuse and redevelopment of the property. Redevelopment benefits the state and local economies, creates new jobs, eliminates blight, revitalizes communities, and reduces urban sprawl. The RRD strives to create a future where Michigan's contaminated properties are reliably managed and revitalized, providing safe areas for people to live, work, and play.

The **Water Resources Division (WRD)** includes land, water management, and pollution control programs addressing the following issues: aquatic nuisance, invasive species, nonpoint source, pretreatment, wastewater discharge (both surface water and groundwater), water management, and water withdrawal. These programs establish water quality standards; issue permits to regulate the discharge of industrial and municipal wastewaters; and monitor state water resources for water quality, the quantity and quality of aquatic habitat, the health of aquatic communities, and compliance with state laws. The WRD also administers programs that help protect sensitive natural resources, including inland lakes and streams, wetlands, floodplains, sand dunes, and the Great Lakes. It is responsible for promoting the best use of these resources for their social and economic benefits and provides technical assistance and regulatory oversight of activities such as dredging or filling of wetlands, streams, and inland lakes; constructing marinas, seawalls, or docks; building in a designated critical sand dune, wetland, or floodplain; and protecting underwater shipwreck resources.

